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There is no magic in ordinary gardening, but when particularly large crops are desired for special feasts, such as those accompanying circumcision or *malanggan* rites, the planting of the taro is preceded by the making of magic. After the ground is cleared, but before the planting begins, the taro magician makes his magic. Then, if the taro is to be used for an especially large and important feast, the rain magician is called upon to make his magic. A large amount of rain is considered necessary for a good crop of taro.[1]

The first stage in gardening is the clearing of a piece of bush ground, between six and seven hundred square feet in size, always done by a man, assisted sometimes by his son. This takes about two weeks if a man and his son work every day. Sometimes all the men of the hamlet will assist. For instance, all the men of Penguli helped Noas clear bush ground for a new garden, and a feast was held later in the day in payment for their assistance. First, the trees and brush are cut down and left a few days to dry and then burned; after this the place for the fence is "marked" by putting vine along the ground, and holes are made in which the posts of the fence will later be inserted. These holes are made with a long stick, sharpened to a point. The posts are stuck in and afterward the cross-pieces of the fence are laid. Bamboo is the most common material used for fences. Vine is used to tie the logs to the posts. When the ground is completely cleared and the fence finished, the garden is ready to be planted.

Planting is the woman's task, and taro is the chief crop. Very few yams are planted in Lesu, but in other villages (Logagon, Lossuk, etc.) yams are planted along with the taro in large quantities. But even here taro remains the staple

[1] In an exceptionally dry season taro may be transplanted to moist ground along a river. Then if rain should come it may be moved back again to its original place.

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244 crop. The men mark the ground where the taro is to be planted with long, pointed sticks, then the women (usually a woman and her daughter) make holes in the ground, also with a pointed bamboo stick, and one taro stalk or cutting is put in each hole, the earth about the hole being patted down with the stick. The whole garden is planted in this fashion. Sometimes a woman will allow a couple of other women to plant in her garden. In this case small plots are allotted to them and the boundary of each marked by bamboo poles. It may be that one woman is waiting while her husband clears ground for a new garden. In return, the woman will usually give some baked taro to the husband of the woman owner of the garden. Women sometimes assist [476] each other in the garden work. Pulong works frequently in the garden of Maralis, her sister-in-law, and Maralis returns the service by working in Pulong's garden. It takes about ten months before the crop of taro is ready to be harvested. In the interim the women weed the ground and pull out any extra shoots, so that all the strength goes into the remaining one.

244 251 When the crop is ready to be harvested the taro is dug up by the women with the same pointed stick they used in the preliminary operations. The outer layer of dirt is scraped off the taro, which is then piled in the baskets and carried home by the women. If it is not for immediate consumption, i.e. if it is to be kept a day or two in anticipation of a feast, it is hung on poles stretched between trees, or placed on long benches constructed of bamboo poles for this purpose. The hanging on poles is the more usual way.

244 After a crop has been harvested, the land lies fallow for from six to ten years.

A man and his wife will usually have several gardens at one time. While the woman works in one, her husband will be clearing ground for a new one next to it, and

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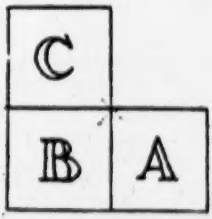
frequently three gardens will be in process at one time. One will be ready to harvest, another is being planted, and a third is being cleared of the dense bush. The following diagram illustrates one woman's gardens:



PLAN OF GARDENS

A is the old garden, where the daughter is pulling the ripe taro.
B is the new garden which she is planting.
C is the garden where her husband is clearing the ground.

The whole family is thus working at one time. The gardens penetrate farther and farther into the bush, although eventually after a sufficient period of time the planting is at the original places. Much pride is taken in the gardens, and whenever I visited them the women showed me around very proudly.

It has already been noted that the produce is the property of the person who plants it. The woman regards the taro as hers, and with it she feeds her family. Parents and children, when they are old enough, all work together in the gardens. At times a married woman will assist her mother, or two sisters or other close kin will help each other. A man is always expected to give assistance in the gardens of his relatives by marriage.

FISHING

Fishing is a purely masculine occupation. But while every man fishes, some are known to be more skilled